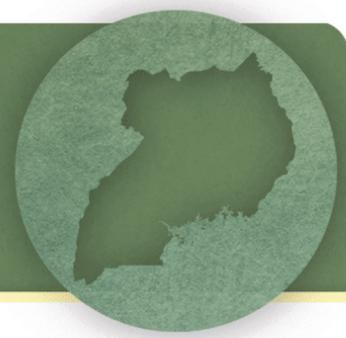




— Thomas & Kristin —
IRVIN
PREACHING THE GOSPEL IN UGANDA



Special Report | October 2020

Psalm 127:3 (KJV) Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

In a prideful manner, man delights in his role as nature's master. All the while failing to master even his own nature in any real way. Were the whole realm of nature mine, I would still be desperately dependent upon the one who makes all things to consist. I'm not sure I have been more helpless than I was in the early morning of October 5, 2020. Kristin and I learned of the conception of our child while in Uganda, January 2020. Though evidence was manifest, we had no idea that in January the entire world would soon shut down due to Covid-19. We considered the discovery of our baby's conception at this time, while in Uganda, to be a particular blessing. It allowed sitting with Keith and Sally Stensaas to discuss plans and expectations for delivery in Uganda. By February we were with Maranatha Baptist Church in Okinawa, Japan. They were excited to learn about our news, as well as help us keep it a secret. We prayed the word would not make its way around the world to our families and home church before us. Our secret was kept, our families and friends were surprised as we systematically made the announcement.

After forty-weeks of joy, waking each morning with my wife eager to show me the movements and the pokes of baby feet and elbows. Regularly feeling her stomach as the baby moves about energetically, an activity that never got old. As her limbs would seem to nearly protrude, our baby would respond quickly as I tickled each protrusion. The reaction was almost immediate and brought us great joy to see. Before Kristin was with child, I struggled to understand the idea of abortion in any way whatsoever. Having now experienced the growth process of a baby in the mother's womb, the idea of abortion is all-the-more alienated from us. What a wonderful experience this has been, and Kristin did a wonderful job eating well and managing her activities as needed to give our baby the best chance at life possible. We would talk amongst ourselves often about what life will be like when our child moves from my wife's womb to being physically present with us. We didn't know the gender, all was left to our imagination.

Then, on the evening of Sunday, October 4th, labor began around 6 pm. It just so happened we were with New Harmony Baptist Church in Holly Springs, MS. A church located some thirty-minutes from our current residence, and as providence would further have it they were having a modified evening service that Sunday. Each first Sunday of the month, New Harmony, immediately after their morning service has lunch together. After lunch, everyone returns to the auditorium for a 2 pm service. Thus church was finished and we were back in our cabin around 4 pm. Otherwise, we might have driven more than an hour away for a 6 pm service, then drive back home somewhat late. Our being close to home in a modified service was a tremendous blessing. That evening Kristin began contractions around 6 pm, by midnight our midwife was onsite with an assistant. At 3:24 am, Monday, October 5th our beautiful baby-girl was born. It was difficult to watch my wife go through such immense pain and difficulty, but she did a tremendous job. Bethany Lanae Irvin was born 6.2lbs and 19" long (I know you ladies would not forgive me if I didn't add that info). Praise God, our baby and her mother came through perfectly healthy. The Lord is good!

As I write this, on Tuesday, October 6th Bethany has proven to be a sweet and rather content baby, which of course means she takes after her mother, though she has quickly become a daddy's girl. The Gift of life and the role God gave us in its production is amazing. Our God placed such a premium on life he allowed his own Son to die that life everlasting might be available to all who were dead in trespasses and sins. Please pray with us that our little girl will grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Please pray I can be the father and husband needed, in this most evident manifestation of my lack of command over nature, we will remain close to the God in heaven who does so effortlessly.